Nakia admired the craftmanship and explained how parts were assembled, why certain materials were used, and why this was characteristically Nez Perce. He had the practical knowledge of how things are assembled but also an artist's perception, an appreciation of design quality and beauty of the pieces in the collection. Nakia explained that being able to examine our collection meant a great deal to him, not only for artistic inspiration but for the deepening understanding of his own cultural roots, for a better appreciation of the talents and sense of aesthetic that defines being Nez Perce.

This represents the primary reason why we keep and preserve collections, at least from the cultural point of view. People are able to see the past through the object, to understand how things were done, and to deepen their appreciation for why they were done. When these objects are examined by someone who is Nez Perce, with fam-

ily stories, with cultural ties, the link to the past is strengthened, the vision of the future is made more clear. Non-Indian visitors are able to see the richness and creativity of another culture. The window of understanding can be opened and a greater appreciation gained for the diversity of American life.

Sapatquayn in Nez Perce is "a showing of objects."

Bob Chenoweth wrote this article from an idea that came from Linda Paisano. Bob is Curator and Cultural Resource Manager for Nez Perce National Historical Park in Spalding, Idaho. Linda is a Museum Technician who is also a member of the Makah Tribe. They work together caring for a large ethnographic collection, a growing historic photo collection and archives/library, and handle compliance-related issues for the vast and diverse 38-site park.

Felice S. Ciccione

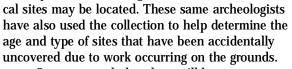
Rediscovering Resources

Pointed projectile, Gateway National Recreation Area. Photo by Klaus A. Schnitzer. ateway National Recreation Area is comprised of three units. In New York there is Jamaica Bay/Breezy Point and Staten Island, and in New Jersey there is Sandy Hook. While these sites are used by visitors primarily for their recreation opportunities, they have a diverse military history that binds them together. This history includes coastal defense fortifications, airfields, an anti-aircraft battery, and Nike missile sites. These diverse defensive areas are all tied to the defense of New York.

The unique history of each of the different units of Gateway has given us the opportunity to obtain a diverse museum collection. Our collection is comprised of uniforms, letters, photographs, ordnance, newspapers, structural samples, maps, firearms, and architectural drawings. It is this diversity that has allowed us to use the objects in different formats.

Many types of objects are used within the park for research about the history of the park. Before doing any restoration work, the photographs and architectural drawings are consulted to make certain that work we will be doing is as historically accurate as possible. These drawings are also consulted by the personnel before major work is done on the grounds. This helps the staff to determine if any cables or pipes may be in the area in which they need to work and they can alter their plans accordingly.

Archeologists also consult the blueprints and maps in the collection to assist them in determining where possible archeologi-



Our maps and plot plans will become an invaluable tool if and when our GIS program becomes a reality. Due to the shifting coastlines of many of Gateway's sites over time, it is the structures that we will use as our consistent landmarks.

Our three-dimensional objects also play a major role in areas other than exhibitry. Many of our objects teach us about our sites in a way that written history cannot. For example, Sandy Hook was used as the United States Proving Grounds prior to the Proving Grounds being located at Aberdeen, Maryland. As a result of the most recent unexploded ordnance sweep on Sandy Hook (there have been others in the past), we have made several interesting discoveries.

One of these finds was what we initially thought was a Civil War era experimental projectile. Subsequent conservation work and research uncovered that our find was actually an experimental projectile of David Lyle, used to rescue people from sinking ships and bring them to shore via mechanical means. The projectile would be shot



from the shore to a sinking ship with a rope attached. The rope would then have a means of transport attached to it to give shipwreck survivors a way to reach the shore.

This information led to a trip to the National Archives where more intensive research found that our projectile was one of only two of that type made. This investigation helped us to learn why David Lyle made this type of projectile, why it failed, and how he learned from this mistake to move on to his next prototype.

We have made many other finds from this sweep. In general they give us a clearer picture of the different guns and projectiles that were tested at Sandy Hook. We have found that they were testing different details on the same items. In addition, the number of rounds that are found to still be live has taught us to be very careful when doing any work that requires even minor excavation!

These same pieces of ordnance are being used in what we think is a totally new light. For use in an exhibition, our projectiles are being photographed in a way that allows them to be viewed as pieces of sculpture, rather than munitions of war. In fact, a viewer has to look carefully to realize what exactly is in the photograph.

While the objects in the museum collection can be used for exhibit purposes, there is so much more that we can do with our artifacts. At Gateway I believe that we have just begun to discover the information that our objects hold. Our exhibit program may be small at the moment, but that does not mean that the use of our museum collection is insignificant.

Felice S. Ciccione is curator at Gateway National Recreation Area. She is in charge of the artifact collection, as well as being highly involved in the research, preservation, and interpretation of all the cultural resources in Gateway NRA. She can be reached at Gateway, 26 Miller Field, Staten Island, NY 10306.

Pamela Beth West

Memoranda of Understanding Can Be the Way to Go

Museum Services in the National Capital Field Area is using the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to work with companies and institutions to promote our museum resources.

So far, we have used these documents to publish a book, a CD-ROM, and several exhibits. In all cases we have required that the NPS name be mentioned in all advertising, brochures, and general publicity for the event. This has given the NPS some great publicity and allowed us to highlight both the collections and the employees that work on them.

These projects have also allowed us to reach the general public as well as provide a vehicle to raise funds for the preservation of collections or to reimburse us for the time we put into the project. In many cases, we have requested monies up front as a reimbursement for staff time. In other cases, we have had as a requirement of the MOU a paragraph that stipulates that the work or project will mention the fact that the public can donate funds to preserve these collections or provide us with information to help identify the objects in the collections.

Pamela Beth West is the curator of the National Capital System Support Office, NPS. Her phone is 202-205-3831; questions can also be directed to her on cc:Mail or on Internet, pam_west@nps.gov.

Servicewide Museum Management Conference

The NPS Museum Management Program Council (MMPC) and the Servicewide Museum Management Program (WASO Museum Management Program) are planning a Servicewide Museum Management conference. The theme of the meeting will be the use of collections for research, exhibits, and heritage education. The NPS meeting will be held in advance of and in conjunction with the Department of the Interior Museum

Property conference. The theme of the DOI conference is "Managing Federally Associated Collections." Both meetings are tentatively scheduled to be held in the San Francisco Bay Area in February 1996.

Sessions at the NPS conference may address collections-related publications, visible storage, exhibits, outreach, providing access to collections, copyright and trademark issues, Native American and other traditional uses, collections on the Internet. Other topics for the conference may include site-specific case studies on any aspect of museum collection use. The conference will also be a forum for introduction of the NPS Museum Handbook, Part III, Collections Use.

This conference will also be an opportunity for NPS curators, natural and cultural resource managers, and other NPS staff to further the goals of Restructuring the NPS Museum Management Program.

—John Maounis

John Maounis is heading the Museum Management Program Council; he was the Regional Curator of the North Atlantic Region and is now the Chief, Northeast Museum Services Center, Boston.